

HUMANITIES — WELSH HISTORY · YEAR 4–6

Owain Glyndŵr

Wales's Last Native Prince — Years 4–6

Key vocabulary

1

Owain Glyndŵr (c.1359–c.1415)

Welsh nobleman who led the most significant Welsh uprising against English rule under Henry IV. Proclaimed Prince of Wales in 1400.

2

The Glyndŵr Rising (1400–1415)

A major rebellion against English control of Wales. At its height, Glyndŵr controlled much of Wales and had international recognition from France and Scotland.

3

Pennal Letter (1406)

A diplomatic letter from Glyndŵr to the King of France outlining his vision for an independent Wales — with its own Welsh church, two universities, and a Welsh parliament.

4

Owain Lawgoch (Owain of the Red Hand)

Glyndŵr's great-uncle — a mercenary captain who claimed the title of Prince of Wales before him. Part of the longer tradition of Welsh resistance.

5

Owain's parliament

In 1404–1405, Glyndŵr convened a Welsh parliament at Machynlleth — the first genuinely Welsh parliament in history.

6

Disappearance

After the rebellion faded, Glyndŵr disappeared and was never captured. He is said to be sleeping in a cave, waiting to return when Wales needs him — the same legend told of King Arthur.



— legacy and significance

Why he matters to Wales to

- 1 SEPTEMBER 1400: Owain proclaimed Prince of Wales. This date is now Owain Glyndŵr Day, a proposed national day for Wales.
- INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION: France and Scotland recognised Glyndŵr as the legitimate ruler of Wales — the only time in the Middle Ages that a Welsh leader received this recognition.
- VISION FOR WALES: the Pennal Letter shows Glyndŵr's vision was not just military — he wanted Welsh universities, a Welsh church independent from Canterbury, and a Welsh parliament.
- TODAY: Glyndŵr's coat of arms (four lions rampant) is on the flag of the Prince of Wales. His image appears on Welsh banknotes. Many Welsh institutions are named after him.
- THE LEGEND: like Arthur, Glyndŵr is said to sleep under a mountain, waiting. This story of the 'sleeping king' who will return is one of the oldest traditions of Welsh and British mythology.

